

# SCRANTON TRIBUNE

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# THE SCRANTON TRIBUNE.

SCRANTON, MARCH 30, 1894.

EVERYBODY WILL SOON WANT TO KNOW all about "A Yankee in Gray."

## No Respector of Persons.

In its zeal to criticize Scranton and Scrantonians, the Wilkes-Barre Record has been led, possibly by inadequate reports, into some very ill-tempered and unjust strictures with reference to the local arrests of Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Rice, the evangelists. We quote portions of the Record's outburst, in order the more effectively to exhibit its intrinsic unfairness:

There must be queer law up in Scranton when burly policemen can bully and harass an ineffective and friendless woman because she preaches the gospel of Christ. There is strange inconsistency in the course pursued toward this woman by Mayor Connell and his action during the little revival in Scranton tabernacle some time ago. On that occasion the mayor issued a proclamation commanding [incorrect] the proclamation merely requested that every business man in the city to close his doors upon a certain day in order that the people might have an opportunity to attend the meeting. The proclamation was generally complied with, although many of the merchants were of different religious beliefs from that of Rev. Mr. Pay Mills. Now, however, when an unknown man and woman appear upon the streets to preach the same gospel, not so eloquently, nor so learnedly, perhaps, as the great revivalist, but in a way that the poor and lowly can understand, they are arrested by police officers and hustled off to the station house like common criminals.

A moment later, after remarking that when Mr. and Mrs. Rice preached in Wilkes-Barre their meetings were quiet and peaceable, the Record continues:

They were not treated as mountebanks and fakirs because they dared to utter the divine truths of the Bible upon the public streets. They were not dragged to the lockup, while the drunkard and the blasphemous were allowed to defile the streets with his offensive presence. Up in Scranton, however, it is different. The authorities of that city seem to have forgotten that the Savior of mankind did not seek the magnificent temples of the Jews when He began His earthly mission. They evidently fail to recollect that He went, not among the rich and powerful, but among the poor and lowly, preaching the divine truths of Christianity along the highways and byways. He gathered about Him the common people, and out under the bines taught them the lesson of salvation.

The poor street evangelist, who tries to follow conscientiously in the footsteps of the Master, who brings words of hope to the poor and the friendless who are shut out from the consolation of our fashionable churches, should be accorded respectful consideration in every Christian community. But the Pharise exists now, as he did eighteen hundred years ago, and nowhere has he made himself so offensively manifest as in the city of Scranton during the past week.

What are the facts in this case? As disclosed at the hearings they are briefly these: Mr. and Mrs. Rice one week ago, at nightfall, without having asked for a permit, attempted to hold a street meeting at Wyoming and Lackawanna avenues. A crowd collected, blockading this, the busiest corner of the city. Officer Feeney asked Mr. Rice not to cause this blockade, it being a clear violation of a city ordinance. Mr. Rice refused to desist from his purposed demonstration. Officer Feeney then placed him under arrest, the prisoner struggling, resisting and making threats. Mayor Connell at once accorded him a private hearing, at which Mr. Rice, in response to a gentlemanly explanation by the mayor of the ordinance and the officer's duty in the premises, blusteringly bade defiance to the mayor, the chief-of-police and the whole city government. He was then remanded for a further hearing, whereupon Mrs. Rice urged him to go to jail, saying she would continue the meetings. The mayor informed her that he would gladly give her a permit and detail a special officer to guard the meetings provided she would select a place that would not interfere with the public. He even arranged with Postmaster Vandenberg to enable Mrs. Rice to speak from the Linden street steps to the new federal building and offered her the protection of an officer, but she refused both offers, declaring she would speak "when she pleased, where she pleased and at what time she pleased." The subsequent arrests have been made in pursuance of this wilful disobedience of the law, and under the right of the law of 1889 which permits a police officer to arrest, without warrant, upon sight any violator of municipal ordinances or person guilty of a misdemeanor. The attitude of both Mr. and Mrs. Rice throughout has been one of superiority to the law and of the defiance to the law's local officers. It has not at any point been reasonable, conciliatory, humble or creditable.

In the case of Barker vs. the commonwealth, appealed from Allegheny county, the supreme court of Pennsylvania at the May term, 1893, affirmed the decision of the lower court as follows: "The streets are common highways, designed for the use of the public in passing and repassing, and in such temporary occupancy as is incidental to the exercise of these rights or necessarily connected with them. No one has a right to obstruct a public street by collecting therein a large assembly of men or boys for the purpose of addressing them in violent and indecent language." The common highways were designed for no such purpose. If the purposes of the meeting be lawful, a suitable place can be obtained for it, without obstructing the public in their undoubted right of passing along their own highway. The liberty of speech does not require that the clear legal rights of the whole community shall be violated. The freedom of the press is as well deserving protection as the liberty of speech; but no one, in his wildest enthusiasm in favor of the former, has claimed the right to establish printing presses in the public streets. One of Ho's printing presses would certainly be as effective in collecting a crowd as the violent harangues described in

his indictment. The nuisance, in the one case, would be quite respectable in its nature and objects compared with the demoralizing character of the other. But both are prohibited by law, as infractions of the public right of passage."

This decision applies directly to the case in question, and is a sweeping rebuke to that form of public propaganda which sets itself upon a pedestal of contempt for regularly enacted law and regularly ordained authority. The public streets are the property of the public, held in trust by the city in order that the rights of their owners, the people, may be preserved and protected. The equal rights spoken of in the constitution of the United States do not mean a right to one man which, when intemperately persisted in, becomes an injustice to any other man. The lesson of this present case is of widespread application and should receive attention.

We dislike to believe that the Christian editor of the Record, or its two Christian proprietors, have been led by the friendly rivalry existing between the two cities to indulge in these uncharitable and wholly unwarranted remarks. We prefer to believe that the Record has been misinformed; that it has not been told the difference between holding orderly religious worship in a large building especially set apart for that purpose, and holding mob-like convocations in the middle of the street, thereby blockading traffic, causing great annoyance to business men and pedestrians and deliberately violating a plain city ordinance.

The duty of Mayor Connell in this case has not been a pleasant duty and he has certainly not courted the notoriety connected with it. But unless we can establish the principle in equity that that which is law for one class is not law for another, unless we can suspend, distort or spurn specific enactments of the city council at will, he is to be commended and sustained in his course by all who believe in uniform and impartial law enforcement. Mayor Connell and the city officials had no quarrel with Mr. and Mrs. Rice because they are poor, because they preach the gospel to the lowly or because they do not worship in fine temples and amid luxuries surrounding. What they ask and what they shall insist upon is obedience to the plain law of the city as it is laid down in the ordinance book; and if we read aright the story of the Divine teacher of Nazareth, He, too, counseled this.

DROP ANOTHER free coinage bill into the congressional hopper and pull out another panic.

It is charged in Philadelphia that the recent adverse report of councils against a municipal electric light plant was due to corrupt practices. Such a charge will not be duplicated here. The question is one which the people will themselves discuss and settle, and there will be no crookedness about it.

Why should private enterprise be inadequate in progressive Scranton to the lighting of Scranton's streets?

## Mr. Cleveland's Veto.

Between the lines of the president's latest message can be read a direct reflection of the halting uncertainty and vacillation that have characterized all the recent acts of this Democratic administration. For the first time in Grover Cleveland's history he is humble, apologetic and deprecatory. One looks in vain for the bold, clear note which once was his pride and boast. Time and trial and failure along many lines have softened his platitude, weakened his wonted obstinacy and bent even his great impetuosity to the force of circumstances. He is no longer a demigod, but, dejected and humiliated, he has become the more commonplace man that he was until quixotic flattery swelled his conceit and puffed out the measure of his vanity.

We say this all the more frankly because Mr. Cleveland, in the gist and burden of his message, has stated virtually the case which any honest man would have stated whose eyes had not been blinded by the free silver fallacy. In its general purport the message is beyond reproach; it is in the lame and halting manner in which its conclusions have been reached that we read plain signs of the idol's downfall and are permitted to trace the subsidence of the Cleveland fall. No similar document ever bore more conspicuously the marks of compromise, struggle and concession.

From the first word to the last it is a serial story of hedging, trimming and palliatory explanation; all the more glaring because wholly unnecessary. For if ever there was a case which an executive might be permitted to plead with ringing and resonant emphasis; if ever there was a case which might justify the swift directness of a magnificent imperialism that came to the rescue of a sound and honest dollar. The Bland bill to coin the silver dollar was in conception, growth and contemplated effect a bill to open the flood gates and to let in the deluge. It was part of a great conspiracy as ever threatened our national credit; a conspiracy which to enrich its factors and abettors would not scruple to rob open handedly all the remainder of our people.

Instead of taking the full legal limit to formulate his impotent dissent; a president of courage and stamina would have sent back his veto in the twinkling of an eye.

While no one will be so unjust as to believe that politics has had anything to do with the Cleveland fall, it cannot be denied that the Cleveland administration suffers by reason thereof. Coming after so many previous evidences of the unpleasant prominence of the Confederate brigadier spirit in administration circles, this newest exhibition of the badness of one conspicuous son of the old southern aristocracy undoubtedly has widespread influence. The rebel spirit, in all its manifestations, variations and tendencies, is unalterably and forever wrong. There is no compromise with it. There is no possible concealment of it. The impulses and the traditions that sustained slavery and that vainly at tempted to dismember the republic cannot be made acceptable to the majority of Americans in time of

peace. They must be buried and forgotten. The descendants of these secessionists must catch the keynote or else surrender control of the government. The attempt to achieve by legislative chicanery and immoral pretence what could not be achieved by four years of bitter civil war needs to be given up, now and forever, as a lost cause.

If this government wants to build and own a canal across the isthmus of Nicaragua, all right. If private enterprise wants to build and own such a canal, all right again. But the two schemes must not mix.

## Another New Industry.

One of the most useful lessons of the recent stringency has been its demonstration of the wisdom of diversifying a community's industries. Had Scranton been dependent solely upon manufacturing of iron and steel it would last year have experienced a depression without precedent. Were it today dependent exclusively upon the operations of our mines, their present slackness would cut poignantly into the very veins of local prosperity. But the fact that we have wisely varied the elements of our industrial strength has shielded and sustained us; and while there has been much suffering, it has not equaled that felt elsewhere.

We desire to call attention to a very important communication elsewhere from the secretary of the board of trade explaining how Scrantonians, if they so desire, may add yet another to the numerous and varied industries that have greatly emphasized this city's importance, in time of prosperity and, in time of depression, interposed as its effective bulwark against hard times. Thorough investigation, by competent local experts, has demonstrated the honesty and genuineness of the Homestead Iron company's recent offer to remove their plant to this city, and it remains for our people to say whether this offer shall be accepted. Inasmuch as their enterprises and generosity have never yet failed, we shall expect soon to announce the completion of this notable industrial conquest.

GOVERNOR FLOWER may snub the citizens' committee of Troy, but he cannot snub the general up rising against rottenness in municipal rule.

THE QUICK improvement that follows wholesome rivalry was well shown in last evening's performance at the Academy of Sardon's "Americans Abroad," by a company comparable with the best now organized. Manager Burgardner has many times been unfairly criticized for the introduction of attractions below the highest class. This criticism has entirely overlooked the fact that Manager Burgardner, like a wise business man, has simply catered to the demand as it exists. As that demand is elevated and elevated, the grade of performances will naturally follow the same course. But with two theaters, each striving to excel the other, there is a possibility that the process of education may be very greatly hastened; and such superior entertainments as those we have had this week will do much to speed the good work.

REV. DR. PAXTON of New York has the floor to explain why a minister who solemnizes secret marriages should enter into a conspiracy of silence with reference to the legal certification.

## An Era of Nastiness.

Such revelations as those printed in yesterday's report of the Pollard-Breckinridge scandal are excusable only on the ground that they show in their true light the utter infamy, degradation and filth of relations which contravene the statute law, defy social conventions and outrage the decency of intelligent mankind. In an age when this abominable nastiness appears to be upon the increase, it is the duty of public teachers, whether in the pulpit, the school room or through the press, to re-emphasize lessons of moral cleanliness and redouble efforts to inculcate social purity and strengthen individual honor.

It is not pleasant for any decent man to breathe such an atmosphere of inexpressible corruption as now emanates from the putrid carcass of Colonel Breckinridge's once lofty reputation. The language of calumny and dignity does not suffice to voice the depths of infamy which this hoary-headed Kentucky hound has wallowed in, and which he now stoically discloses to the astonished gaze of a shuddering public. Yet, now that he has forced this exposure upon that public, he must be content to take the consequences, and the cause of sound morality must not fail to advance its interests, even though to do so it has to exhibit him as the most nauseating example of utter filthiness that has ever received the misplaced confidence of a deceived constituency.

The pestilential air from Judge Bradley's court room will soon be purified, let us hope by the rendition of an immediate verdict for the entire amount of damage sought. The morbid stench which permeates the news columns at present will give way presently to cleaner and sweeter and more wholesome odors. Breckinridge will be doomed, as is his just desert, to an oblivion which even the crack of doom would have difficulty in terminating. Miss Pollard will be permitted, if her sense of honor be not wholly shriveled and withered, to seek in seclusion and penitence that slight chance of earthly forgiveness which our unjust social canon ungenerously accords to the woman who errs and is found out. But while the trial is in progress, it will be necessary for its details to be printed with considerable frankness; for in the terrible eloquence of the awful facts themselves is preached the strongest sermon that ever caused sin to wither.

It was once claimed that McKinley was unpopular in the great northwest; but times have changed since prosperity died.

LOWEYISTS AND AND HUMBERS are not the only ones who should attend public sessions of councils.

APPARENTLY the scariest thing about this light problem is light.

Another Point Against It.

General Coxey is also an ardent advocate of the income tax.

## THE NEWS IS LEGITIMATE.

Why the Press Serves a Useful Purpose in One Case.

Washington News. No one can doubt that the suit now pending before Justice Lindley has excited more widespread interest than any other civil suit in the past twenty years. Many causes have contributed to this situation. It was brought on the capital of the nation where much that is worst in national life as well as much that is best comes to the surface and attracts the greater attention because the city is the focus of the public gaze and whatever is revealed comes forth in the most intense electric glare. The defendant to the suit is a man known personally to nearly every section of the country, and is the possessor of a name which for a hundred years or more has occupied the places of honor in the nation's pantheon of religious, legal, military and political worthies. The shock given to the country by the charges against him and by the confusion which has not resulted in an unanimous opinion as to his entire legal responsibility, though the moral responsibility cannot be denied, and unfortunately every one seems to have every judgment in the case. The desire of the public, therefore, to learn the facts brought out by public trial of this case is legitimate, and the newspaper performs its legitimate function in publishing the news concerning it.

## The Season's Grand Change.

Managrin Times. When spring comes dashing up the street the store will scarce have gone. When the man who used to shovel coal will have to mow the lawn.

## Our Industry That Is Protected.

New York Recorder. The amended tariff bill is a betrayal of American labor and capital. As a poverty producer it is perfect.

## Talks Like a Kansas Populist.

St. Louis Globe Democrat. Henry Labouchere is in danger of being considered the Mrs. Lease of British politics.

## Not the Coal Field Hope.

Baltimore American. It is to be hoped that this will prove winter's farewell engagement.

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